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Architecture.

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS.

Regular Meeting of November 15, 1859.—An interesting debate took place in relation to the decision of the Committee upon the designs submitted for the Plymouth Church, Brooklyn. A general opinion prevailed that the design selected was impracticable, and that the award of the first premium to its author was not justified. An opinion also prevailed that the designs by R. M. Hunt and Jacob Wrey Mould were by far the most creditable in the exhibition, and that it was unfortunate that the limited expense of the building precluded their adoption.

By order,

HENRY DUDLEY, *Secretary pro tem.*

Foreign Correspondence, Items, etc.

We are permitted to make the following extracts from a private letter, dated at London the 5th ultimo:

"I intended to have written you from the Isle of Wight, but my time for sketching there was so brief, I could not devote myself to anything else. After being out all day in search of the picturesque, or at actual work, one feels too much fatigued to do anything more than attend to such correspondence as turns up every day. Here in England everybody seems to do everything by writing; and it is not unusual to find, when one enters the house, a score of notes to be answered and sent to one's neighbors.

"When at Bonchurch (Isle of Wight), I found many subjects that pleased me; I set to work in the most persevering manner, through sunshine and storm, filling up the clinks of time by sketching old anchors, lobsterpots, tarred windlasses, boats, and all such little bits as are only to be seen in a genuine pictorial state at the rustic villages on the shores of England. I found at Arreton a very good interior church-scene—quite a 'David Roberts.' It is the church where the 'Dairyman's daughter' worshipped and is buried. The church is very old, of Norman foundation, but rebuilt at different periods, until it has become quite picturesque: fortunately it has not been much tampered with in its more recent restorations. The cottage of the 'Dairyman's daughter,' about a mile from the church, is also picturesque. It remains to the present day about the same as at the time she lived her life of piety, as set forth in the beautiful tract by Rev. Leigh Richmond, by which her name has become known. Her proper name, which is not mentioned in the tract, was Elizabeth Walbridge. All tourists on the Isle of Wight make a pilgrimage to her grave and to the cottage in which she lived.

"There is much that is very charming on the Isle of Wight to repay one for time spent there; there is nothing very grand, but much that is worthy of study. Carisbrooke Castle is a very interesting object; the gateway still shows over its arch, in good preservation, the arms of Elizabeth; and the portcullis-tower, of a much earlier period, is quite perfect. The inner old oak door, bolted through and through with iron, is still there, and swings regularly to admit visitors as of old; an entire suite of rooms of two centuries ago is yet remaining, and a keep of Roman foundation still looks proudly over the surrounding country. The same well, 250 feet deep, which supplied water to the Roman builders and to Roman legions, and since to the chivalrous steel-clad men who dared and delighted to break

lances out of love for 'my ladie,' is as prolific in quantity and as pure as ever, still furnishing water to the humble porter's family, and slaking the thirst of visitors who come from all parts of the world to see the remains of olden times. Within a few months past the remains of a Roman villa have been discovered near the castle; there is a pavement, a bath, and portions of wall, all found in a state of complete preservation.

"The air on the south coast of the island, upon what is termed the 'undercliff,' is very delightful; it is highly recommended by the medical faculty for consumptive people. The vegetation has quite a tropical look from its luxuriance; flowers that are preserved with difficulty in a hothouse thrive through the winter in the open air; all creeping vines and blackberry briars have a happy time—by the way, blackberries are the only one thing you may have here in this grey old England, for the picking of them—everything else is taxed. We devoted six weeks to this balmy Italy of England, where the 'heggs' and the 'hail' and joints cost more than they do in 'Lunnun,' returning with brown faces, tanned and freckled enough to resemble the 'ring-streaked and speckled' stock of Jacob."

From another letter, dated London, 4th Nov. 1859:—"I am much obliged to you for the CRAYONS, which throw considerable light upon American Art proceeding; they are very interesting, exhibiting as they do a growing sense of the value of Art and an increased diffusion of taste and feeling for it. I believe this is very much the case in England; indeed, you can hardly mix in any cultivated society without stumbling upon collectors or amateur workers. It was proposed, a short time since, to have an Amateurs' exhibition in London next year, and I should be very glad to see the plan carried out. I am sure it would call from secret retreats a great deal of very beautiful Art, pursued silently and modestly by persons who never dream of exhibiting their works in any of the great public galleries. A great many of our English clergymen are good sketchers; and I believe the Archbishop of Canterbury, in addition to many other estimable qualities, possesses this virtue likewise.

"Something which I read in a recent CRAYON induces me to mention the London 'Artists and Amateurs' Conversation.' Perhaps you may know all about it; but if not, it may interest you. This is a private Society, numbering about 150 members, part artists, part amateurs; they hold four meetings yearly—generally in February, March, April, and May, at which there is a large display of studies and sketches, besides a good show of pictures, contributed by the various members. It is not imperative for a member to contribute, but he is expected to do so on one of the four evenings, and for this purpose the names are divided into four lists, so that every one may know when his contribution is due. The Society sends round for the works of art offered, and returns them the following day. Each member besides personal admission to all the meetings, has four transferable admissions for friends. A moderate subscription defrays the expenses—hire of rooms, tea, coffee, etc.; and these meetings are really among the most agreeable and fascinating features of our winter occupations. The 'Graphic' Society is somewhat similar; but only artists are admitted as members, and the 'Graphics' do not invite ladies, whereas the 'Artists and Amateurs' do. Exhibitions of this sort are in many respects more interesting and instructive than regular galleries of finished pictures. There is something in the sketches of artists and others just as they are taken on the spot, which one does not always find completely carried out in the finished work, and

the most rapid sketches and blots of some men are more suggestive than the most elaborate works of inferior hands. I could name more than one artist of good reputation whose sketches are admirable, and his pictures—all finished according to some patent recipe or crotchet—far inferior in truth and merit. If any of your artists should visit England at the proper time; they would find much to interest them in these unassuming gatherings.

"I am sorry to say photography is becoming a nuisance. It is no doubt a wonderful achievement, and very valuable for many purposes—for architectural illustrations, for scientific purposes, and in various other ways, even for portraits and such like uses. But people will try to manufacture photographic pictures—and the stereoscope in the hands of some persons is a serious infiction. I know many houses where you cannot decently make your escape without staring at and admiring at least two dozen pictures—groups of foolish people at a wedding—hungry people eating cold chicken—smart people dancing—quiet people drinking tea, and other ineffable trash, besides a continuous series of family pictures, for no well-regulated family is happy now, unless all their portraits are taken by photograph at least once a quarter."

THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER, 1859.

Sketchings.

ANNUAL ADDRESS OF THE CRAYON TO ITS FRIENDS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

WITH the present number we close our sixth volume and the fifth year of our journalistic labors. In commencing our seventh volume it is but meet that we should say a few words to our readers:

Every undertaking in life is sufficiently thorny, sufficiently crowded with trying obstacles; that of conducting an Art-Journal is particularly so. Of works of art it is impossible to speak in praise or censure without trenching upon personal sensibilities, upon professional interests and peculiarities. To please all would be tantamount to non-existence, and to discharge our duty conscientiously is to retard our pecuniary income, for few men can distinguish between an abstract act of justice as to their productions, and their own individualities and interests. To praise everything by way of becoming successful, is to sink all the dignity and truthfulness that belong to journalistic effort. It is, in truth, to impose upon the community, to mislead those who need proper guidance. There must be many who necessarily depend upon the opinions of a periodical like ours in their judgment and purchase of Art-productions, many who have no direct communication with the Art-world except through our columns. Now, to be just to these, without offence to others, is the delicate part of our editorial course. We have been always sensible of this; to have been less so would have given a larger number to our subscription list. To conduct the CRAYON as a matter of pleasure or amusement, is not in our line, to conduct it as a money-losing scheme is also foreign to our views. We never undertook it with the intention of making a fortune out of it; to have it pay its own expenses was all we looked for. Beyond this point it has scarcely gone, owing to the apathy of the community generally and the

Art-world particularly. If the public do not want the CRAYON, we do not want to obtrude it upon them. If their professional interest in Art be genuine, their interest in an Art-Journal must be somewhat vital—if the noise made about Art has any interior root of reality, the monthly visit of an Art-Journal must be both acceptable and welcome.

We can only test this by a reference to our subscription list. To report the result of this would be as discreditable to the community as it would be disheartening to us. Yet we are not insensible to the fact that as we grow older as a nation, as we increase in wealth and refinement, there is a corresponding amount of interest evinced in everything pertaining to Art. To wait for the slow incoming of this tide, however, is a work of great patience; it is to forego everything in the present for the sake of the future. Now, if the public is determined to doom the CRAYON to this patient endurance, we would like to have a positive demonstration of it; if, on the contrary, it wishes to favor it as an organ of Art, to recognize it as a living reality, as an instrument of use, we would, also, like to have a positive demonstration of it. To be consigned to a neutral condition, is neither for our interest nor for that of the public. We have tried to do our duty—to work up to advantage all the materials within our reach; if the public is not satisfied, let it say so, and we shall retire from the not envious position which has been imposed upon us. If an Art-Journal is an object to them—if they think they want it, that it is an advantage to them, let them act accordingly, and give us opportunities and means of doing that which will be as satisfactory to them as to us. We are too well aware of the indifference to our labors of many of our friends; but we can better tolerate this indifference than convert the CRAYON into a mere organ of puffery. If it is to live on, it must be by honest means—by the expression of what it deems to be right without reference to the consequences to mere individual interests.

To the public we make an appeal in behalf of the CRAYON in commencing its seventh volume. If their decision is adverse we shall gracefully yield; if favorable, we shall double our efforts in trying to make the CRAYON all it might be as the organ of American Art and artists, and as a guide to the community in their judgment and choice of works of Art.

To avoid giving our Journal too special a character and tendency, we have opened out its columns to the treatment and discussion of general subjects pertaining to literature and other branches of knowledge.

We have been favored with essays and translations from many well-known writers—men who are content to serve the cause in which we are engaged without publishing their names to the world. To all our contributors we feel grateful for their important assistance, and hope that during the incoming year they will show renewed interest in our undertaking.

Now that our country begins to renew her wonted prosperity, now that the future begins to open out so brightly, may we not hope that the friends of the CRAYON will rally round it and give it a position and circulation worthy of the intelligence of the country, and of its taste and growing refinement.

THE COMPETITION PLANS FOR THE PLYMOUTH CHURCH.

WHEN, in May last, we gave to our readers the architectural *pronunciamento* of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, we felt in the humor of laughing at folly as it flies; little did we think we should ever have to record the tragic conclusion of that funny episode in the history of Brooklyn monumental art. We sup-